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C O N F I D E N T I A L ZAGREB 003545

SIPDIS

BELGRADE FOR AMB. HOLBROOKE

E.O. 12356:DECL:9/13/10

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SUBJECT: NO UN OBSERVERS PRESENT IN WESTERN BOSNIA AREA  
OF OPERATIONS

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1. (C) - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. UNCRO DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL OPERATIONS UK COL. WILLIAMS PULLED DCM ASIDE SEPTEMBER 13 AT A BRIEFING FOR THE NEW UN HUMANITARIAN CRISIS CELL, SET UP IN RESPONSE TO THE PROBLEMS OF CIVILIAN POPULATIONS IN CROATIA AND BOSNIA. WILLIAMS POINTED OUT THAT HV AND HVO GAINS OF THE PAST FEW DAYS HAVE CREATED A LARGE AREA IN WESTERN BOSNIA THAT IS EFFECTIVELY DEVOID OF UN OBSERVER PRESENCE, AND WHICH MAY BECOME THE SOURCE OF NEW LARGE NUMBERS OF REFUGEES.

3. THE FRONT, ACCORDING TO GOC CLAIMS, NOW RUNS ALONG A LINE FROM TITOV DRVAR EAST INCLUDING SIPOVO NEARLY TO JAJCE. BOSNIAN SERB LEADER KARADZIC CONFIRMED ON TELEVISION SEPTEMBER 12 THAT SIPOVO WAS OCCUPIED. ACCORDING TO WILLIAMS, UNCRO OBSERVERS ARE NOT ALLOWED NORTH OF THE LIVNO-PROZOR ROAD FROM THE SOUTH, AND ARE DENIED ACCESS TO BOSNIA FROM THEIR FOUR OBSERVATION POSTS LOCATED IN FORMER SECTORS NORTH AND SOUTH OF CROATIA. UNPROFOR FORCES DO NOT HAVE ACCESS FROM THE EAST.

4. THIS MEANS THERE ARE NO UN OBSERVERS PRESENT IN A LARGE SWATH OF TERRITORY. WILLIAMS ESTIMATED THAT 20,000 NEW REFUGEES MAY SHORTLY EMERGE FROM JAJCE AND SAID THAT PAST CROATIAN ACTIONS IN SECTORS NORTH AND SOUTH CAUSE FEARS THAT HOSTILE ACTS AGAINST CIVILIANS WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE NEWLY 'REINTEGRATED' AREAS OF BOSNIA AS WELL. WILLIAMS SPECULATED THAT THE CROATS MAY CONTINUE TOWARDS BANJA LUKA AND CAUSE A ROUT OF SERBS IN WESTERN BOSNIA.

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5. SERBS REMAINING IN CROATIA CONTINUE TO HAVE SERIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS IN SECTORS NORTH AND SOUTH. THE UN PROVIDED A FULL SUMMARY LISTING INCIDENTS OF KILLINGS AND HOUSE BURNINGS IN THE KRAJINA REGION TO ZAGREB DIPLOMATS SEPTEMBER 13 (EMBASSY WILL FAX TO EUR/SCE). NEARLY 800 SERBS REMAIN CONFINED IN THE UN HEADQUARTERS COMPOUND IN KNIN, AS A SERIES OF AGREEMENTS RELATING TO THEIR LEAVING FOR SERBIA (MINUS SEVERAL -- FIRST 65, NOW 32 -- OF THEIR NUMBER CHARGED WITH WAR CRIMES) RAN INTO SNAGS FROM CROATIAN AUTHORITIES.

6. COMMENT; THE UN NEEDS TO BE ALLOWED TO ENTER THE NEWLY-TAKEN AREAS SOONEST TO DOCUMENT WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THE CIVILIAN POPULATION THERE.

GALBRAITH

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